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COVID-19: Knowledge, Attitude, Practice in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Background: Malaysia is no exception to the COVID-19 pandemic, and to date, there is no specific treatment to cure the disease, and the vaccine is still not available. Hence, to stress the importance of practising protective measures.

Objective: This study intended to examine the knowledge, attitude, and practice towards COVID-19 and its preventive measures among Malaysian amid the CMCO (Conditional Movement Control Order) during the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia.

Methods: This cross-sectional study was conducted online among Malaysians aged 18 years old and above from May to June 2020 using a self-developed questionnaire through snowball sampling.

Results: A total of 571 respondents were analyzed. The average age was 26 years old, and monthly income was RM1500, about half were females (57.8%), had education level to undergraduate (58.1%), one-third were Indians (34.7%), one-fifth were Malays (23.6%), one-third from Sarawak (31.2%), and one-fifth from Selangor (25.0 %). The correct rate for all three outcome domains was high, 83% for knowledge, 85% for attitude, and 86% for practice. Few respondents still holding the myths regarding COVID-19. No significant factors contributed to the knowledge score. Factors that contributed to higher attitude scores were monthly income and employment status. Factors that contributed to higher practice scores were female, Chinese, and medical employees. The higher the knowledge score, the higher the attitude score and practice score.

Conclusions: Malaysians discerned and optimistic about COVID-19, its preventive measures, and the implementation of MCO. They had confidence with the government in combating COVID-19 and were practising preventive measures.

Key Words: Attitude, COVID-19, Knowledge, Malaysia, Practice

INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a pandemic, affecting 216 countries, with 8 061 550 confirmed cases and 440 290 confirmed deaths globally.¹⁻⁵ Malaysia is the earliest to declare positive cases among the Southeast Asian country.^{5,6,7} Following the tremendous increase in COVID-19 cases in Malaysia, the government has enforced the Movement Control Order (MCO). It commenced on 18th March 2020, endeavouring containment and mitigation of the COVID-19 cases to flatten the curve of positive cases, thus lighten the burden of health care systems in Malaysia.⁷⁻¹⁰

The success of MCO permitted the country to substitute MCO to Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO), whereby more restrictions were lifted. However, the community is demanded to adhere to the Standard Operation

Procedure (SOP) and continuously habituate the new normal to hinder another surge of COVID-19 cases.^{3,9} This new normal comprised wearing a face mask, washing hands frequently with hand sanitiser or soap and water, social distancing, and avoiding crowded places.^{6,11} These practices demand the community to transform their behaviour, which relies on their knowledge and attitude towards the disease and its preventive measures.¹²⁻¹⁷ A prior study by Azlan et al.² had demonstrated a decent level of knowledge concerning COVID-19 among Malaysian before the implementation of MCO.²

This current study intended to re-examine the level of knowledge, attitude and practices regarding COVID-19 encompass sign and symptoms, mode of transmission and preventive measures, among adult Malaysian using self-de-

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